

The Bethel Courier.

VOLUME XXI, NUMBER 2

SUMMER 1997

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



An Oral History Night commemorating the 50th anniversary of NTL's founding in Bethel was held at NTL's Clusters Conference Room on July 3. Participating in the panel discussion were seated (left to right) Gwyneth Bohr, Barbara Douglass, John Shorb; standing (left to right) Natalie Timberlake, Barbara D. Brown. The National Training Laboratory developed in the mid-1940s through the collaboration of Kurt Lewin, Ph.D., Chairman of the Faculty and Director of the Research Center for Group Dynamics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Ronald Lippitt, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology at the Research Center for Group Dynamics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Leland Bradford, Ph.D., Director of Adult Education Service of the National Education Association; Kenneth D. Benne, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. With a grant from the Office of Naval Research and support of the National Education Association, the group sought a place in New England reasonably near M.I.T. where travel costs for the researchers would be minimal and sufficiently isolated so that a "cultural island" effect might be developed to assist in the training. Gould Academy in Bethel, Maine was suggested. It was selected and since 1947 NTL has been holding sessions in the town where the T-Group process, sensitivity training, and encounter groups were among the experiences offered to a world-wide clientele. As a result of NTL's presence in Bethel, the town has become more cosmopolitan and gained the reputation as perhaps the best-known small town in the world for those involved in the social and behavioral sciences.



Maxine Clough (Brown) (1910-1995) stands behind two students (l to r) Henry Heath and Gilbert LeClair in front of the LeClair residence on Philbrook Street, ca. 1933. In the background (l to r) is the Water District building and the back of Brooks Bros. store. Courtesy of Daisy LeClair.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BETHEL'S PHILBROOK STREET

by Geraldine S. Howe

Editor's Note: This paper was given at the Society's October 3, 1991 monthly meeting and has been revised and updated for publication in this issue. The author wishes to express her gratitude to all who assisted in assembling the information on the history of this street.

The origins of this street extend back to April 29, 1907 when John M. (1840-1923) and Pauline E. (1840-1938) Philbrook deeded to the town a two rods wide strip of land from Main Street to the property of C.K. Fox (1872-1933). This survey begins at the Main Street end of the street on the eastern side.

Storage Shed--This site between Brooks Bros. Store and the barn was once owned by Fred Edwards (1865-1947), who had a small garage on the property. The deed gave him permission to remove the building and a right of way to it. He sold to D. Grover Brooks (1892-1955) in 1931. The garage on the lot was moved to Songo in the late 1940s. A barn in Upton, once owned by Dana and Donald Brooks' grandfather, Aldana (1855-1928), was dismantled and moved and rebuilt in the late 1940s to provide storage and garage space at the rear of the store building.

(continued on page 2)

Barn--This barn was once on Alphin Twitchell's (1804-1886) farm in Mayville, and was moved here from what is today the property of Norman and Sylvia Clanton. It was used for a stable for years, first by Wallace Kilgore and then by Horace Littlefield, who once had living quarters in part of it. Littlefield pursued a variety of occupations, one of which was selling suits. Later Marshall Hastings owned the property and kept horses there. His wife, Norma, sold the premises to D. Grover Brooks on 7 November 1939. Tenants here besides Littlefield and his daughter Madeleine were the Gallant family. Stanley Gallant told me of riding his motorcycle from here to the Brick Grammar School on High Street. Others who lived here as well were Doug Cushing, Milan Chapin, Earl Bean, Dana Rand, and Norma Dudley who worked for Littlefield in the stable at one time.

Conroy House--This was the first house built on the street, which had just been staked out. John Philbrook sold the land to John Swan (1862-1923) on 3 March 1906. John was living at the time on lower Paradise. He was a carpenter and built much of the ten room house himself. He married Grace Brown (1861-1958) and they had two children Sylvia (1893-1983) and Merle (1899-1944). The house was wired for electricity about 1912. At one time J.H. Swan was listed as a fire engineer for the Bethel Fire Department and his son Merle as fireman, second assistant. In 1915, Sylvia married Dellison Conroy (1891-1950), who came from Berlin, NH and was tax collector in that city. They lived in the upstairs apartment. Their son Rupert was born here in 1918. Dellison Conroy was believed to have been the first person in town to own a radio. He once operated the Domestic Hand Laundry, which he had purchased from Ralph Young. He was formerly a clerk at Bosserman's Drug Store on Main (now Preb's). In August 1918, he closed this business and moved to Berlin. In January 1919, Conroy was hired as a clerk in the store of Ceylon Rowe. When John Swan died, his wife went to live with the Conroys and the apartments were rented. Grace returned in the 1930s and lived upstairs with her son. Merle until his death, then she went back to Berlin with Sylvia and both apartments were rented again. In 1950, Grace and Sylvia returned to Bethel after Dellison's death. Those renting here through the years were Syl and Daisy LeClair, Milo and Marjorie McAllister, Clifford and Carrie Merrill, Gardner and Wilma Gorman, Carl and Irene "Noni" Pike, Paul and Patricia Carter, Errol Donahue, Jr., Alton and Mary Carroll, Lou Bean, Elmer Bean, Jr., Bernice Heath, Ruth Farwell, Edith Howe (1894-1975), Glen Swan, and Will and Gladys Bean. Among those born here were Gilbert LeClair, Glendon McAllister, and Norma Bean Buck. Sylvia lived here until her death. She had earlier turned the property over to her son Rupert, who transferred it to his son Robert in 1986. He and his wife Michelle and children live here today.

Hunt House--The land at this site once belonged to Ethel Haselton (1880-1956), who lived on Chapman Street. She sold to Ida Haselton (1855-1926), who sold to Perley Andrews (1877-1949) and he built the house here in the 1920s. Mary Brooks (1860-1934) purchased the property on 28 July 1928. Following her death, Agnes Brooks Twaddle (1885-1871), Harry Brooks (1883-1943), and D. Grover Brooks sold the house to Grace Chamberlin. The next owner was Richard Perkins, who acquired the premises on 26 November 1945. It was transferred to Madeline and Frank Hunt, Jr. on 15 April 1960. They sold to their son



Former John Swan (now Conroy) house on Philbrook Street in 1926 with the living quarters connected to the Brooks Bros. barn in the background. Courtesy of Daisy LeClair.

David and he and his family live there today. At one time Chester Kimball and family rented here.

Ethel Bisbee School--The land for the school was purchased from Clarence Fox on 23 April 1925. At a special town meeting, \$16,500 was appropriated to buy the lot and erect the school, which was to be 48 feet by 75 feet. The note would be paid off at \$3000 per year. The building committee consisted of Henry Hastings, Sr. (1865-1934), Frank Russell, Wade Thurston (1884-1969), and John Burbank. An addition was made to the school in 1947. It was closed to elementary students in the early 1990s, but continues to be used for adult education, the district exchange, and community purposes.

LeClair House--The land for this house was the undivided half of the premises that had been deeded to Ida Haselton and Rachel Mayberry by John M. Philbrook on 12 January 1911. Ida Haselton sold to Sherman Haselton on 12 January 1911 and he in turn sold to Cyrus Twitchell on 18 July 1923. Lottie Inman bought the property on 9 February 1924 from Cyrus Twitchell. She sold it to Sylvester Le Clair (1890-1976) on 6 June 1929. His widow Daisy lives here today. There was no cellar under the house when the Le Clairs purchased it so Syl LeClair hired someone to dig one, but they found a huge boulder in the exact spot where he wished the furnace to go. The workman placed dynamite in the rock and blew it into three pieces without any damage to the house. Each piece then was hauled off by a team of horses.

Water District Building--The Bethel Water Company, now the Bethel Water District, was founded in 1889. No one seems to know just when this building began to serve as an operations building for the Water Company. Daisy LeClair is uncertain that it was there when she moved to the street in 1926.

Storage Shed--This building was built with lumber salvaged from a barn that once stood on Herbert Lyon's farm on Grover Hill. It was built in the 1950s on land purchased from Ralph Young (1893-1982).

Throughout the ninety years of its existence, Philbrook Street continues to be an avenue with a combination of residential, commercial, and educational elements. Though a short street, it possesses a rich history.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Marion E. Chapman, Hermitage, PA
Robert D. Stoddard, Merrimack, NH
Don F. and Peggy Tobin, Bandera, TX
Dean and Priscilla Walker, Kittery

BOOK NOTE

A valuable but difficult to find resource for the study of Andover, Maine families is being issued in an updated edition by the Andover Educational Fund. Entitled *Andover Memorials*, this collection of genealogical and biographical data about this western Maine town's early families was written by Agnes Blake Poor and based on information passed down to her from her uncle, Silvanus Poor. Originally published in very limited numbers, the book is being republished with new maps, photographs and an index. Comb bound and running about 130 pages in length, the book is available for \$15 plus 6% sales tax for Maine residents and \$3 shipping for the first copy and \$1 for each additional book sent to the same address. Anyone interested in ordering should send a check to the Andover Educational Fund, P.O. Box 32, Andover, ME 04216. Shipment is expected this fall.

RECENT GIFTS

Among the recent gifts to the Society are the following: Reuell and Lois Leavitt, photo of the Chase house at Hanover, postcards of White Mountain hotels; Barbara Kuzyk, old Bethel business thermometer; Milton Inman, Bethel postcards; Linda Brown Foster, genealogical typescripts and photocopies relating to the Foster and Cushman families; Mary Morin, wooden and stuffed toys, Newry ledger book, mounted photographs of Bethel area people and buildings, large Victorian what-not shelf, glass invalid's drinking cup and box, plus misc. items; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, letter and snapshots of Bethel/Gilead people; Emerson Clough, history of the Veteran Ninth U.S. Infantry Division and a copy of his military certificate; Arlan Jodey, two Bethel Steam Era Museum T-Shirts formerly owned by his father Walter Jodrey; Stanley Howe, new index to the Spurr history of Otisfield. Much appreciation is expressed to all of the above for their generosity.

THE BETHEL SOLDIERS OF '61

From the pages of the OXFORD DEMOCRAT, 13 August 1886, compiled by Judge C.F. Whitman of Norway.

In the summer of 1862, Col. Kimball had a sharp fight with a superior body of the enemy at Manchac Pass, La., which was situated across Lake Ponchartrain, and having gained a complete victory, succeeded in taking some Rebel flags which the Regiment was allowed to retain. This was unusual, and only permitted in cases of the most meritorious service on the field of battle. The following general order explains itself: "Headquarters Department of the Gulf. New Orleans, July 24, 1862. General Order, No. 51. The Commanding General of this department takes pleasure in publishing the following endorsement from Washington of what he has considered the useful services of Lieut. Col. Kimball of the 12th Regiment of Maine Volunteer, and the brave men under his command at Manchac Pass was very gratifying to the Department, and it entirely approves your action in allowing the Regiment to retain the colors which they had so gallantly taken from the enemy. By the command of Maj. Gen. Butler. R.S. Davis Capt. and A.A.G."

In December, Gen. Butler was superseded by Gen. N.P. Banks, and having the Union forces increased to 30,000 men, set about active operations against the enemy who had not ceased to hope and expect the re-capture of New Orleans. Upon the organization of Gen. Grover's Division

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I hope Society members and friends will forgive me for writing another time about our major expansion of space and the associated Capital Campaign, but as many of you can probably imagine it is uppermost in my mind these days.

It would be hard not have it topmost in my thoughts with the Dr. Moses Mason House Meeting Room turned into a virtual "mail room" for assembling and addressing the Capital Campaign mailing. Also, I have had the pre-occupation of figuring out what my own pledge would be--as the officers and trustees were asked to do in advance of the general mailing to all those on the mailing list.

Foremost of all is the exciting feeling of good fortune in being in the right place at the right time--to be in a position to say later on, "I was there" and "I helped make it happen."

I hope all of you are feeling the same excitement as you study the Capital Campaign mailing, and you will also want to join in helping us "make it happen."

Walter Hatch

(Bethel Soldiers)

of the 19th Army Corps, the 12th Maine was brigaded with the 22nd Maine, and two New York Regiment, with Brig. Gen. Wm. Dwight as commander and was sent to Baton Rouge, La., the capital of the state. Here the daily duties in camp and garrison were regulated as follows: Reveille, 5 a.m.; Surgeon's Call, 6:15 a.m.; Breakfast, 7 a.m.; Guard Mounting, 8 a.m.; Drill Call, 9 a.m.; Recall from Drill, 10 a.m.; Drill Call, 11 a.m.; Recall from Drill, 12 Noon; Dinner Call, 12:30 p.m.; Drill Call, 1:30 p.m.; Recall from Drill, 2:30 p.m.; Retreat at Sunset; Tahoo, 8 p.m.; Taps, 8:30 p.m.

The following generals order was issued shortly after Gen. Grover with his forces had taken possession of Baton Rouge, and is perhaps the one referred to by him when he asked "Maj." True if he didn't know the order, when taking off the pelt of a sheep, as already related: "Headquarters U.S. Forces Baton Rouge, December 19, 1862. General Order. No. _____. It having been requested to the general commanding that plundering and marauding, notwithstanding the strident orders to the contrary has already taken place, Regimental and Battery Commanders are hereby directed to cause immediately upon the receipt of this order a thorough inspection to be made within the limits of their commands, and all persons having in their possession property which does not belong to them, to be seized and turned over without delay to the Provst Marshall. A list of such parties, with the property to be reported to these headquarters at an early date as possible, in order that the perpetrators of such offenses, so demoralizing and disgraceful to the soldier, may be brought of this kind. The Provost Marshall is directed to instruct his guard to be particularly on the alert for marauders and struggles, and when detected, to be arrested by him and their cases reported to these headquarters. By order of C. Grover, Brig. Gen. Com'n G. J Hibberts, Jr. A.A. Gen'l."

The Regiment participated in the expedition up the Grand Lake to Irish Bend, where Gen. Grover had a battle with the rebels, in which his troops were victorious. There were no casualties in the 12th Maine. At this time the formation of the companies in line

(continued on page 4)

SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. They may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents must include 6% sales tax. Orders under \$10 should include \$1 for postage and handling; those over \$10 but under \$20 should include \$2 and all those over \$20 should add \$3 to cover mailing expenses.

1997 Calendars (New England Barns or Covered Bridges) \$9.95
Moses Mason House Tile \$3.50

Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes) \$2 each
(Moses Mason House, Bethel Railroad Station, Summer House, Bethel Covered Bridge)

Booklets (The Family Farm, Made in Bethel) 75 cents ea.

Dr. Moses Mason and His House \$1

Molly Ockett \$2

Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill \$2

1880 Map of Town of Bethel \$2

1880 Map of Three Bethel Villages \$2

1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill \$1

1858 Atlas of Oxford County \$7.50

T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult, S, M, L, XL) \$8

Moses Mason Museum (Child, 4-6-8-10-12-14) \$8

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Adults, S, M, L, XL) \$8

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child, 4-6-8-10-12-14) \$8

Post Cards: Dr. Moses Mason, Agnes Mason, Moses Mason House 10 cents each

Tote Bags (Moses Mason Museum logo) small \$7.50 large \$11.50

Placemats, 4 season, set of four Bethel scenes \$7.50

Books

Barnes, *Maine Life: The Photographs of N.C. Maxim* \$16.99 Paper

Bean, *East Bethel Road* \$50 Cloth

Bennett, *Bethel, Maine: An Illustrated History* \$39.95 Paper

Bennett, *Oxford County, Maine: A Guide to Its Historic*

Architecture \$20 Paper

Bennett, *The White Mountains* \$14.99 Paper

Bethel, *Maine Cemeteries* \$9.50 Paper

Crosby, *From An Old Leather Trunk* \$5 Cloth

Crosby, *I Was A Summer Boarder* \$5 Cloth

Fraser, *A History of Maine Made Automobiles* \$34.95

Cloth \$24.95 Paper

Hathaway, *Everything Happened Around the Switchboard*

\$13.95 Paper

Howe, *Concise History of the Maine State Grange* \$20 Cloth

Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected*

Farm Buildings of New England \$24.95 Paper

Hutchinson, *The Rumford Falls & Rangeley Lakes Railroad*

\$20 Paper

Killgore, *Descendants of Joseph Killgore 1690-1764* \$65 Cloth

Lapham, *History of Bethel, Maine, 1768-1890* \$45 Cloth

Lapham, *History of Woodstock, Maine* \$19.95 Cloth

Little, *American Decorative Wall Painting 1700-1850* \$9.95 Paper

Maine the Pine State: *From Prehistory to the Present* \$29.95 Paper

Mills, *Genealogy of Samuel & Frances (Pembroke) Mills Family*

\$5 Paper

Parkman, *The Gould Academy Story* \$7.50 Paper

Russell, *Indian New England Before the Mayflower* \$15.95 Paper

Shirreffs, *The Richardson Lakes* \$29.95 Quality Paperback

\$39.95 Cloth

Visser, *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings*

\$19.95 Cloth

C. Wight, *A History of Newry* \$5 Paper

P. Wight, *Newry Profiles* \$5 Paper

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling \$10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012. If the items you ordered are in stock, they will be sent by return mail. For further information, please call toll free 1-800-824-2910.

(Bethel Soldiers, continued from page 3)

were as follows: F.1, A.2, I.3, C.4, H.5, E.6, K.7, B.8, G.9. They passed through the Bayou Country, where Solomon Northrup, a free colored citizen of New York, who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery, once lived. He was fortunate enough, however, to get away and write a book giving an account of his life and a description of the country. It was one of the richest parts of the State, but negro life on the plantations was supposed to represent the very worst phase of slavery. All are familiar with the account of that old Christian negro, so vividly portrayed in Uncle Tom's Cabin, and though he never existed, yet so strongly was he painted, to my youthful imagination, that he is as real to me as Benj. Franklin.

Thousands of counterbands, on the advent to the Army into the country, flocked to the camps, and every official could, if he chose, have a willing servant without money and without price. Not a pillar of fire, but a black cloud, so to speak, followed the Army by day and by night.

The enemy, beaten in several engagements, retreated up the Red River, and our forces occupied Alexandria. He was further followed to Grand Ecore, while Admiral Porter, moving up the river with his gun-boats, caused the Rebel chieftain to hastily retreat to Shreveport, where his demoralized forces were allowed to rest forwith further pursuit.

The movement against Vicksburg by the Union troops under Gen. Grant had already begun, and Gen. Banks wisely decided it was best to move on Port Hudson and complete in case of his own and Gen. Grant's success the opening of the Mississippi River.

Accordingly on the 23rd of May, he put his army in motion, and in two days time the place was practically invested. Col. Kimball was in command of the 2nd Brigade of Gen. Grover's Division, and Lieut. Col. Ilsley of the Regt. It participated with honor in the siege, being in the assaults and doing its duty to the uttermost, as the soldiers from Maine were ever wont to do. On the 8th of July, they had the satisfaction of seeing the rebel colors inside the fortifications lowered and the white flags run up. The siege of Port Hudson and the complete opening of the Mississippi river, cut the Rebellion in twain and rendered it certain that it was thenceforth only a question of time when it would collapse.

The Regt. lost at Port Hudson sixty-eight killed and wounded. There were several casualties in Co. A., but none of these were from Bethel. There had been considerable sickness in the company--the hot and unhealthy climate of the far south not agreeing with men accustomed to the bracing air of old Oxford County.

A number of Bethel soldiers had been discharged for disability, and among them were R.B. Bean, S. M. Bean, J.M. Barker, John Grover, Jr., F.O. Gerrish, Moses F. Kimball, I. Wm. Richardson and Charles R. Ryerson. Adelbert Grover died at Ship Island before the capture of New Orleans.

(to be continued)

IN MEMORIAM

Died, 1 May 1997, Esther Mitchell, Boothbay, Senior Member

Died, 4 June 1997, Dorothea Hitzrot, Topsham, Life Member

Died, 7 June 1997, Lettie Brooks, West Paris, Senior Member

Died, 21 June 1997, David Nichols, Lincolnville, Life Member



William S. Hastings (3rd from left) with his friends and cousin at Pine Point on Umbagog Lake (near Upton) in the summer of 1943. Also shown in photo (left to right) are D. Grover Brooks (1892-1955), Harry Brooks (1883-1943), David Barrie (Harry Brooks' son-in-law now living in New Hampshire), and his first cousin, John Hastings Howe (1891-1943).

DIARY OF WILLIAM S. HASTINGS

1934--July 1, Sunday, went to Greenwood. Played 4 sets of tennis and went swimming. Water was great. July 2, Haying. Built spray platform and horse hoed. In evening worked from 7 to 10 on scraping the canoe. Fair and cool. July 3, Same as yesterday. Evening ditto. Fair and hot. Two showers went just around us. Rained a little here. Tornado in other parts of the State. July 4, worked all day. Saw fireworks at Bethel in eve. July 5, Hayed and sprayed. Fair, hot and dry. Finished taking paint from canoe in evening. Used a torch and heated paint until it blistered and softened. Faster method than using paint remover. July 6, Sprayed a.m. Tractor hoed spuds in p.m. In evening we finished the smooth coat from the canoe. Sanded other side and started patching the holes. July 7, hoed all day. Fair and cooler. Laid out tennis court in eve. July 8, Sunday, lots of callers here. Played tennis. Fair and cool. July 9, Haying again. Fair and hot. July 10, Fair and hot. Haying in home field. July 11, Same weather. Finished home field. Back to "Ephraim Piece." July 12, celebrated by taking a back dive off the load of hay when the trip rope broke. Lame and sore but no broken bones. July 13, haying. Had a nice shower in the p.m. We have put in 17 loads in 5 days. July 14, cloudy and cool. July 15, worked in shed and varnished canoe. July 16, big day. Edward Alan Hastings born at 7:30 p.m., weight 8 lbs., everyone o.k. July 17, haying. July 18, haying. Good weather. July 19, same. Finished haying tonight. July 20, raining some. July 21, spraying. Put on 1300 gals. of Bordeaux Mixture and Arsenate. July 22, usual Sunday. July 23, Bob's boy, Robert Warren Hastings born at 12 M. Weight ten and a half lbs. Dad and I went to Albany Mt. for blueberries. Poor picking. July 24, plowed 3 acres on horse pasture. Painted canoe last time. Canoe has taken about 40 or 42 hours work and \$7 worth of material. About \$20 for the job. Took about 30 hrs. to remove old finish. Smooth coat took two weeks to dry. Paint was Old Town Canoe Co. Special G.S. Paint. Makes a fine bright finish. Hope it will wear well. Dark green color. Inside is O. Town Canoe Spar Varnish made by Murphy Varnish Co. July 25, cloudy. First cloudy day since Edward was born. Hoeing today in garden. Cleaning out side. Bob in Rumford after barrels. July 26, hauled wood. July 27, hauled wood. July 28, rained all day. Ruth's folks up here in p.m. July 29, Sunday, Dad,

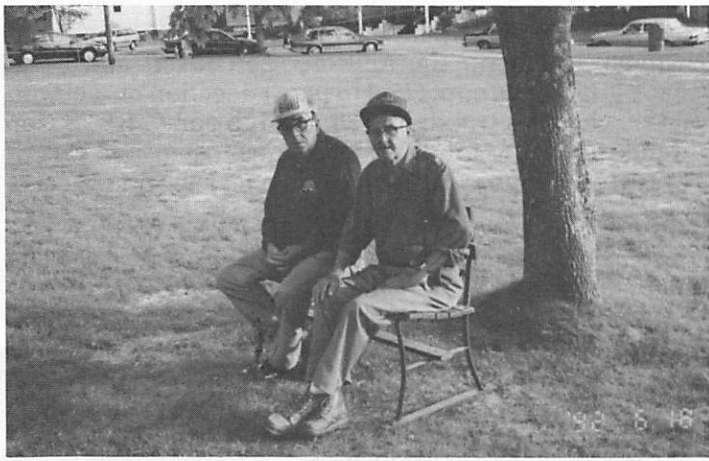
Barb, Virginia, Bill and myself took canoe up river as far as Hemlock Island [in the Androscoggin River] and back. Canoe is tight as a cup. I had to patch a section of keel with marine glue and wood. July 30, tried to spray. Broke vine turners on tractor. July 31, rained some. We rogued [weed-ed] 2 acres of spuds. Carpentered in p.m. I became 33 years of age.

August 1, cased garage doors. August 2, made and hung one door. Two end doors hang inside and roll on middle opening. Middle door hangs outside and rolls south. August 3, put second door in place and made 3rd door. Doors are of Washington fir [Douglas fir], 8' square and heavy as heck. August 4, finished last door, all painted one coat, look pretty good. August 5, took Ruth and Edward to Greenwood and Dad, Bill, Barb, and I went to Cousin Edward's camp on Lower Kezar Lake in Fryeburg. Took kids canoeing on stream. August 6, spraying, cold today and yesterday. Windy. August 7, spraying. August 8, painting, making steps, etc. August 9 and 10 [no entries]. August 11, went to Baldface for blueberries. Arrived at camping place at 11 a.m. Picked from 1 to 6 and got about 16 quarts. Poor picking for Baldface. Had a good night. August 12, up at 3:30 a.m. On ledges and picking at 6. Got about 16 quarts and quit by 11. Came off in p.m. Good easy trip. August 13, spraying on Haakon's. Dug Ben Tyler's load of hay out of mud in p.m. August 14, spraying and mowing oats. August 15, spraying on Hastings. August 16, spraying on Hastings and got 3 loads of oats in p.m. Threshed out 66 bu. August 17, spraying again. August 18, threshing. Nice weather. August 19, went to Greenwood. Bill had seen a big bear at his camp, and four deer. August 20, threshed seven loads and got seven from intervale. 215 bu. in one day. That finished ours and gave a total of 355 bu. from five acres. Took a load of straw to Greenwood in eve. August 21, threshed for Ceylon [Kimball] in a.m. Mowed 2nd crop clover in p.m. August 22, shot four chucks in p.m. August 23, changed range shelters and placed 131 pullets on range. August 24, moved one range shelter. Got one load of 2nd crop. Dorothy Currier [Ruth classmate] and her parents called in p.m. August 25, mowed Farwell's oats. Got 2nd crop in 3 loads to date. August 26, took canoe and motor to Twitchell Pond. Fine day. Canoe is tight as a cup. August 27, threshed for Kimball and Farwell. Billy got run over by a wagon. August 28, raining. August 29, mowed 2nd crop. August 30, went to Norway. Bob and Dad dug spuds. 30 bu. August 31, carpentering on porch. Dressing poultry.

OUR READERS WRITE

From Phil Learned: "I would like to make some comments regarding the boat, *The Helen*, on page 187 [of *The Richardson Lakes: Jewels in the Rangeley Chain*]. First of all, this boat was a gas powered motor boat and belonged, of course to Larry Parsons, who inherited it from Ed Coburn. I have no knowledge that Larry Parsons ever owned a steam boat. On July 20, 1946, the boat came down the lake from Lakewood Camps and landed at the dock at South Arm. The passengers aboard the boat were Louise Dickinson Rich, a gentleman with one leg, and a small boy. I don't know what their names were. Flint Johnson from Rangeley, Maine, was the very able captain aboard the boat. I was waiting for Flint in the boat at the South Arm. Flint gassed the boat up and headed back up the lake toward Lakewood Camps. Some distance from the dock, I felt extreme heat on my back. I turned; about and the

(continued on page 6)



Frederick McMillin (right) with his longtime friend Earl Hutchinson on the Bethel Common, 1992.

MEMBER PROFILE

Frederick J. McMillin was born at Eskasoni, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, 23 December, 1915, the son of John J. and Virginia Edgerly McMillin. He and his family moved to Bethel, Maine in 1923.

Educated in Bethel schools, he graduated from Gould Academy in 1935. In his early years, he was a projectionist at Odeon Hall in the Cole Block and the Bethel Theater (now the site of the Bethel House). He was employed by P.H. Chadbourne Co. as a lumber grader for thirty-nine years before his retirement in 1981.

Following the death of his first wife, Frances Strout, he married her sister Minabelle on 9 October 1944; they were the parents of three children, and later three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

During his retirement, he spent many hours working on his Mason Street house and assisting with electrical work in the area. In the warm weather months, he could often be found sitting on the Bethel Common discussing all the local news with his longtime friend Earl Hutchinson (see above photo).

A life member of the Society, he was a very active volunteer, serving on the Building Committee, helping with various maintenance projects, and keeping a watchful eye on the Dr. Moses Mason House and its grounds.

(Our Readers Write, continued from page 5)

entire back of the boat was just a ball of fire. I looked to see where Captain Flint was, and he had already left his stool and was going through the sliding glass door in as pretty a dive you ever saw anyone make. I wasn't long in following him. We were both in the water watching The Helen continue on her way up the lake with flames coming out all of the open doors and windows. The Helen was able to go some on its own before it finally ran aground on a cabin that was built on a raft that was tied to one of the islands at South Arm. It set the cabin on fire. The wind started to blow the boat back toward South Arm. In the meantime, Theron Virgin and Rex Waite, who were camping on the south shore of South Arm commandeered Theron Virgin's boat, the *Therocella*, and started out to rescue us. Flint and I weren't aware of this, and the only person that we could see on the shore was Merle Gammon who owned Sunset Cabins at the South Arm. I mentioned to Flint that we should swim over and try to grab onto a log that I could see



The Helen, once owned by "Captain" Edward Coburn, and later by Larry and Alys Parsons at the Lakewood Camps dock in better days.

(Our Readers Write)

nearby. Flint said, 'Don't worry, we don't need to do that, because Merle is over there, and he'll soon be out here in one of his rowboats.' Merle was indeed there and the rowboats were there, but he had no oars for them. In the meantime, the *Therocella* was underway to come out to rescue us. Two people in the water don't make much of a target, and Theron and Rex were unable to see us. They naturally went toward the burning *Helen*. This was rather discouraging, and we were both getting rather tired. I said, 'Flint, we should have swum over to that log. I don't know how much longer I can tread water here.' 'Well,' Flint said, 'put your finger tips on my shoulder.' I put my fingertips on Flint's shoulders, and down he went out of sight in the water. So I retrieved my fingers from his shoulder, and we

(continued on page 8)

EDITOR'S CORNER

The *Courier* has now passed its 20th anniversary of publication. It began in December 1976 and until 1980 was published only twice a year. In June 1980, it became a quarterly and since that time has appeared four times a year. Usually eight pages in length, it has in recent years contained as many as twelve pages. This issue marks the 76th one produced over the past twenty years. The *Courier* has been modified and changed throughout this time, but has not strayed very far from its original purpose to keep Society members and friends informed of what is happening with their organization, to provide opportunities to order Society publications and items from the museum store, to offer a membership application, and for many the most important function—to publish local and regional history articles and book reviews.

Few, if any, historical societies in the State have continued to be committed to this role for such a long period of time. The *Courier* will continue to evolve and change as time goes on, but its fundamental commitment to its readers should remain the same. Suggestions are always welcome and new contributors to its columns are constantly being sought. With the addition of E-Mail opportunities announced in the last issue, there is one more way of letting us know your thoughts and ideas. We look forward to hearing from you.

SRH



Gen. Clark Edwards' funeral at Bethel's Universalist Church (now the Nazarene Church) in 1903. The man with the white hair in the second row directly back from the center of the coffin is believed to be Gen. Joshua Chamberlain, distinguished Civil War general, former Governor of Maine, and

former president of Bowdoin College. Gen. Edwards was the commander of the 5th Maine during the Civil War and the Democratic candidate for Governor of Maine in 1886. Courtesy of the 5th Maine Regiment Center.

Join the Bethel Historical Society, Western Maine's historical research center.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

1. free admission to the museum
2. special discounts in the museum store
3. preferred rate for meeting room rental
4. special library and archival privileges

5. quarterly publication, *The Bethel Courier*
6. reduced course fees
7. voting rights in the Society
8. special invitations to Society events

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012

- ☐ Sustaining (Individual) - \$10
- ☐ Contributing - \$20
- ☐ Patron - \$30
- ☐ Benefactor - \$40
- ☐ Student (under 18 years) - \$3
- ☐ Senior (over 55 years) - \$5

- ☐ Life over 55 years (Individual) - \$75
- ☐ Life over 55 years (Couple) - \$125
- ☐ Life under 55 years (Individual) - \$150
- ☐ Life under 55 years (Couple) - \$200
- ☐ Individual Preference (any amount over \$10)
- ☐ Corporate - \$50

*You are cordially invited to a Capital
Campaign Reception in honor of the future
Center for Local and Regional History,
Sunday, September 7, 3 - 5 P.M.
on the lawn of the
Dr. Moses Mason House
14 Broad Street, Bethel, Maine*

(Our Readers Write)

both continued to tread water. In the meantime, Theron and Rex had discovered that we were not in the burning boat and put about, noticing these two dark heads in the water. They put the *Therocella* about to come and pick us up. Believe me, it was the slowest boat that I have ever seen in my life. They did put about and in doing so, they broke the tiller chain, so they could no longer steer the boat with the wheel. One of them, I think it was Rex, got down under the fantail and grabbed the tiller bar and Theron guided him on which way to turn the rudder to get back to us. When they came alongside, we were most happy to see them, and they pulled us aboard the *Therocella* and took us to the landing at South Arm. Rex Waite's wife came by while we were resting on the lawn and wanted to know if we wanted a drink of water. Flint Johnson told her that we thought we'd had enough water for one day. In the meantime Larry Parsons had gotten word that the boat had burned or blown up, and came down with a Christcraft and picked us up. My eyebrows were burned off and a great deal of my hair. After this adventure, Larry bought the Al-Lar, which he owned and ran until he sold Lakewood Camps to Stanley, Susan, and Janne. I hope you've enjoyed this tale, and will at least correct the fact that *The Helen* was never a steamer."

Copies of *The Richardson Lakes* are still available. See Society Sales on page 4 for details.



*Published quarterly by the Bethel Historical Society,
Stanley R. Howe, Editor. Please address all comments and
inquiries to Editor, Bethel Historical Society Publications,
Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217. Telephone (207) 824-2908 or
1-800-824-2910.
E-Mail: history@bdc.bethel.me.us*

ISSN 0749-9108

The Bethel Historical Society
P.O. Box 12
Bethel, ME 04217-0012

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
BETHEL, MAINE
04217


SAVE OUR HERITAGE

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Walter Hatch, President; Alvin Barth, Vice President;
Paul McGuire, Secretary and Clerk of the Trustees; Roger
Conant, Treasurer; Trustees: Lorrie Hoeh, Arlan Jodrey,
Rebecca Kendall, Charles Raymond, Margaret Wight

CORPORATE/BUSINESS SPONSORS

Andover Educational Fund, Inc., ~ Bethel Furniture
Stock ~ Bethel Spa Motel & Shops ~ Brooks, Bros., Inc. ~
Chapman Inn ~ R.A. Douglass, Inc. ~ Goodwin's
Insurance, Inc. ~ Greenleaf Funeral Home ~ Institute for
Applied Behavioral Science ~ Mead Oxford Corporation
dba/Mead Publishing Paper Division ~ Nancy Morris
and Lois Kilroy ~ Northeast Bank ~ Oxford West
Telephone Co. ~ Pat's Pizza ~ Preb's Market Place
Pharmacy ~ River View Motel/Suites ~ Rostay Motor Inn
~ Smith and Town Printers ~ Sunday River Inn and Cross
Country Ski Center ~ Sunday River Ski Resort ~ S.
Timberlake Co. ~ Skidder's Deli ~ The Bethel Citizen ~
The Bethel Inn and Country Club ~ Union Water Power
Company ~ Western Maine Supply